



VAUS Representatives and Deputies Handbook

**Developed by VISION 18 VAUS
Revised (2002) Voluntary Service
Southern Arizona VA Health Care System
Tucson, AZ**

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National VAUS Committee

The VAVS National Advisory Committee (NAC) advises the Under Secretary for Health and other members of VHA Headquarters staff on how to coordinate and promote volunteer activities within VA health care facilities and on matters relating to volunteerism. The members will:

- Promote the VAVS Program
- Communicate VA policies to their constituencies
- Make recommendations to improve volunteer service to veterans

The Chief Administrative Officer, VHA Headquarters, serves as Chairperson. The Director, Voluntary Service Office, serves as Deputy Chairperson.

The membership of the Committee is composed of national organizations. Each organization designates one National Representative and up to two Deputy National Representatives from each organization accepted for representation. Additional deputies (up to a total of six) may be appointed when the need is justified and approved by the Director of the Voluntary Service Office.

VA Voluntary Service (VAUS) Committee



Every VA facility has a VA Voluntary Service Committee which is made up of representatives of organizations who have members participating in the VAVS Program. The Committee serves in an advisory capacity in coordinating the established plans and policies for volunteer participation in the VA Volunteer Program.

Meetings of the Committee are held four times a year, and each member of the Committee receives a copy of the minutes. Attendance at the Committee meetings is extremely important, and active participation is an understood requirement for acceptance and certification as a VA Representative or Deputy Representative of each organization. At least one Representative or Deputy Representative must attend the quarterly meetings. Membership of a participating organization will be terminated if there is no attendance at three consecutive meetings.

The Associate Medical Center Director serves as the Chairperson of the VAVS Committee, and the Voluntary Service Officer serves as the Deputy Chairperson of the Committee.

VAVS Representatives and Deputy Representatives are selected and certified to the Medical Center Director by the National Certifying Official of that organization. Representatives and Deputies may represent only one organization on the Committee



Annual Joint Reviews



An Annual Joint Review (AJR) is a report completed each year by the Voluntary Service Officer and the Representative and Deputy Representatives of each affiliated organization. This report provides an accounting of the organization's participation in the VAVS Program during the past year. It also gives Voluntary Service staff and the representatives the opportunity to meet and develop new program goals. These goals help ensure active participation by the organization in programs for the welfare of veteran patients.

Announcements are made available notifying the Representatives and Deputies of the month in which the Annual Joint Review must be completed. It is the responsibility of the Representative to contact Voluntary Service to schedule a date to complete this required report.

After the completion of the Annual Joint Review, copies are sent to the National Officials of the organization and the local VAVS.

Regularly Scheduled Volunteers



Regularly scheduled (RS) volunteers are individuals who participate in the VAVS Program in a regularly scheduled assignment under VA supervision. The services of VAVS volunteers will be for the purpose of supplementing, not replacing, VA compensated staff.

To officially become an RS volunteer, an application will need to be completed in Voluntary Service. Upon completion, an interview/orientation will be conducted and job assignment determined. An identification badge will be issued through Voluntary Service.

Occasional Volunteers



Occasional volunteers are those individuals serving under the VAVS Program who do not meet the requirements of RS volunteers. Other than copies of the Occasional Volunteer Time Sheets, no individual records will be maintained on occasional volunteers.

Recording Volunteer Hours



Every volunteer who reports to the VA to perform their job assignment must utilize the Auto Log-in designated computer terminals. For those volunteers and organizations whose assignments are in the evening and/or on weekends, sign-in sheets are available from Recreation or in the Voluntary Service Office.

Each month, the hours logged into the computer from the previous month are transmitted to Austin, Texas. Once the reports are generated by Austin, they are electronically transmitted to Voluntary Service. The VAVS Representative will receive this report monthly and should contact the Voluntary Service Office if there are any questions.



October

- Military Order of the Purple Heart of the U.S.A., Inc.
- Ladies Auxiliary Military Order of the Purple Heart
- National Society Daughters of the American Revolution

November

- The American Legion Auxiliary
- Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A., Inc.
- Ladies Auxiliary to the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S.
- Catholic War Veterans

Mission

Southern Arizona VA Health Care System

We provide quality health care to veterans
in an environment of compassion,
education and research.

Vision

Be a model of clinical and
organizational excellence.

Core Values

- Trust
- Respect
- Commitment
- Compassion
- Excellence

Schedule of Annual Joint Reviews



January

- AMVETS
- The Masonic Service Association of the U.S.

February

- Ladies Auxiliary of the Fleet Reserve
- Marine Corps League
- Military Order of the Cootie of the U.S.

March

- American Ex-Prisoners of War, Inc.
- The Salvation Army
- United Voluntary Services

April

- The American Legion
- Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks
- Disabled American Veterans
- Gold Star Wives of America, Inc.
- Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S.
- Women's Army Corps Veteran Association

May

- Paralyzed Veterans of America
- Women Marine Association
- Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc.

September

- American Gold Star Mothers, Inc.
- AMVET Auxiliary
- Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary
- The Forty and Eight
- WAVES National
- Women's Auxiliary to the Military Order of the Cootie,U.S.A.

Recognition



Volunteers have a significant impact on the VA and should be recognized for their contributions. Once a year, regularly scheduled volunteers are recognized at the Annual Recognition Ceremony. Eligible volunteers are presented with awards based on the amount of hours contributed. Hours are cumulative and are reflected on a fiscal year basis (October through September).



Gifts and Donations



All gifts and donations made to the VA facility must be coordinated through Voluntary Service. In order for Voluntary Service to properly record and acknowledge donations, all contributions should be accompanied by the name, address and organization of the donor.

Monetary donations are deposited into appropriate accounts according to the wishes of the donor. If a purpose is not specified by the donor, the funds are used according to patient needs. Voluntary Service sends an acknowledgment letter to the donor with an explanation of how the money will be used.





When requested, Voluntary Service will provide any potential donor with information regarding the needs of our patients.



VAVS Representative Responsibilities



The VAVS Representative is the official representative to the facility in all aspects of the organization's participation in the Voluntary Service Program. The following is a list of the Representatives responsibilities to the VAVS Program.

-  Each newly appointed Representative must meet with the Voluntary Service Officer soon after being certified to receive orientation regarding the VAVS Program. At this time, the Representative will also be officially registered with the Voluntary Service Office. This is important in order for the Representative to be on the mailing list to receive notices and minutes of meetings and other activities. It is also important for the Representative to inform Voluntary Service of any changes in address or telephone number.
-  The Representative must continuously update Voluntary Service Staff regarding all aspects of their organization's participation in the VAVS Program.
-  The most important duty of the Representative is the distribution of all information regarding the VAVS Program to each chapter, post or unit of the organization within the facility area. The Representative is a vital link between the community, members of the organization and the facility. The Representative is relied upon to provide accurate information to the membership.
-  The Representative must attend the quarterly meetings of the VAVS Committee or in his/her absence, designate a Deputy Representative to attend the meetings.

Voluntary Service Vision



- ★ To provide excellence in support to the facility's staff to enable them to deliver quality health care to the veteran patients.
- ★ Educate the community and service organizations to the fact that the Department of Veterans Affairs is on the cutting edge of health care reform.
- ★ Encourage the community and service organizations to play an active role in the new and innovative approach to Voluntary Service programs and establish a cadre of proficient, dedicated volunteers that provide exemplary service to our Veterans.



The Mission of Voluntary Service is best expressed through its desire to Serve our Veterans:

Veterans and volunteers are our focus. Committed to putting the veteran and his/her family's needs first

Excellence in service to the veteran patients, service organizations, VA staff and community is our priority

To encourage volunteers to share our vision and join us in promoting excellence in health care and quality service

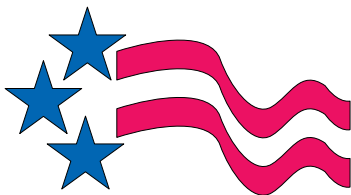
Educate the community and service organizations to the fact that they can become a vibrant and intricate part of the facility and the Voluntary Service programs

Recognize the unwavering dedication of volunteers that give their time and talents to enhance the quality of life for our veteran patients

Acknowledge and thank a veteran, daily, for his/her service to our country

Never forget those who served...

Secure quality service to the veteran patients



Once a year, if required, the VAVS Representative will meet with the Voluntary Service Officer to complete the Annual Joint Review.






The Representative has the responsibility of informing their membership of the needs of the patients in the form of volunteer support or other resources. Additionally, the Representative must recruit volunteers from the organization's membership to fill these needs.



Deputy Representative Responsibilities



The VAVS Deputy Representative is a full working partner of the VAVS Representative. The following is a list of their responsibilities to the organization and the VAVS Program.

-  Each newly appointed Deputy Representative must meet with the Voluntary Service Officer after being certified to receive orientation regarding the VAVS Program and to be officially registered with Voluntary Service.
-  It is also the responsibility of the Deputy Representative to attend the quarterly meetings of the VAVS Committee.
-  The Deputy Representative should also participate in completing the Annual Joint Review.

Community Relations



When requested, a VA staff member is available to speak at organizational functions, conventions, meetings and other activities. Any request for a speaker should be made through Voluntary Service, and appropriate notice should be given to ensure participation.

Local, State and National Officials are encouraged to visit and tour the VA facility. The VAVS Representative should notify Voluntary Service well in advance of any visit in order for the officials to be properly received by the VA staff.



8.

Check List for Representatives



Have you:

1. Attended VAVS meetings regularly?
2. Established an ongoing campaign for recruitment of volunteers for service at the VA facility?
3. Met with the Voluntary Service Officer for your Annual Joint Review to evaluate the past and discuss future participation by the organization?
4. Brought officials and interested members to VAVS meetings and to tour the VA facility?
5. Invited VA staff to attend meetings of your organization to assist in telling the VAVS story?
6. Done your best to interpret Voluntary Service to your organization?
7. Emphasized the fact that veterans are our top priority?



9.